SHIKIGAMI NO SHIRO

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CHAPTER 3

THE MIBUYA... HUH

HYUUGA DETECTIVE OFFICE

SEEMS LIKE YOU'VE PICKED UP SOMETHING REALLY INTERESTING!

REALLY!

AND...WHAT ABOUT THE BARRIER...

YOU DON'T EXPECT ME TO JUST LEAVE HER THERE, DO YOU?

TO THINK THAT YOU'VE BROUGHT SUCH A GIRL BACK...

YOUR TASTE IS REALLY NOT THAT GOOD, KOUTAROU.

THERE IS NO PROBLEM AT ALL.

FUMIKO-SAN, BUTLER-SAN AND I HAVE SET UP A DEFENSE BARRIER ON THE ARTIFICIAL SATELLITE, "DAI GYAKUTEN GO".

THAT WILL EARN US A LITTLE MORE TIME.

FLABBERGASTED

He's huge

I AM KIM DAE JEONG

NICE TO MEET YOU... KOUTAROU-SAN.

EH....
NICE TO MEET
YOU TOO...?

ON
THE HIDA
MOUNTAIN—

SAYO

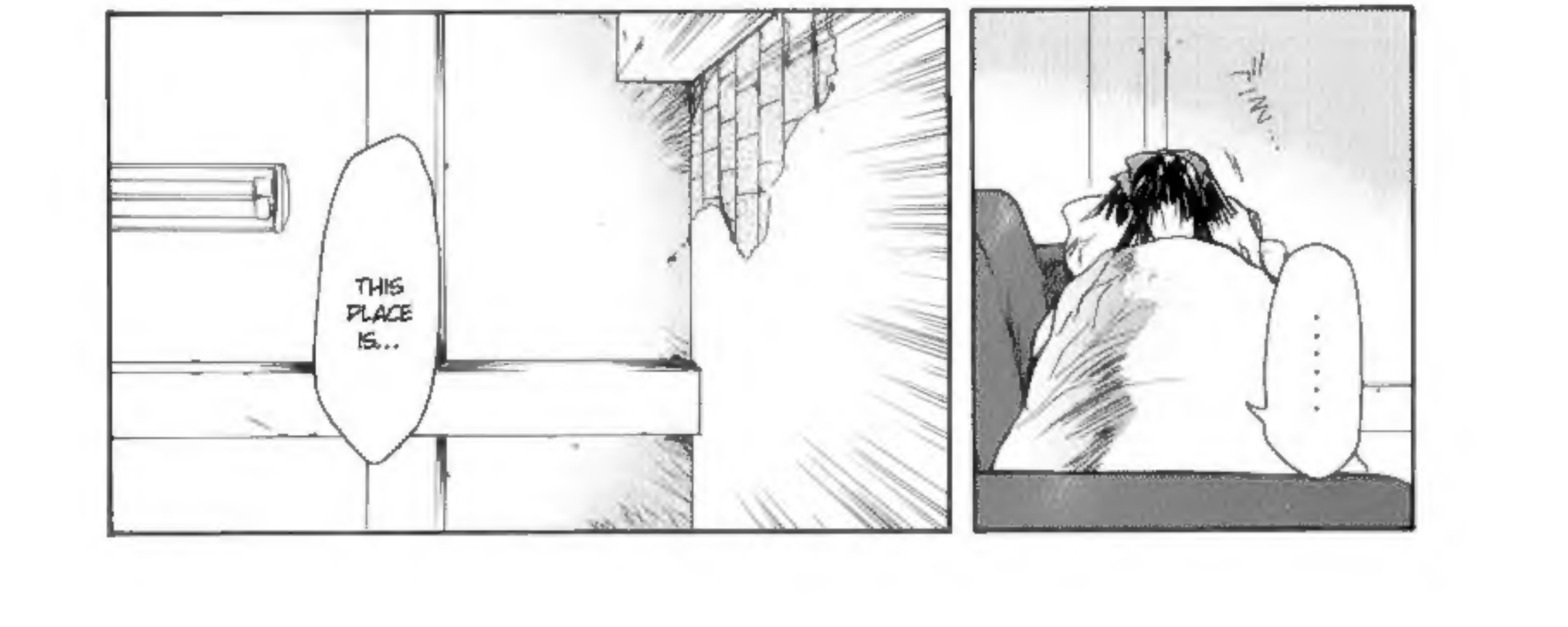
UNDER-STOOD.

BRING ALONG THE SKILLS OF MIBUYA AND HUNT IT DOWN.

A GOD HAS APPEARED IN TOKYO.

…!?

Part 1


THIS PLACE IS...
...!!

YUUKI... SAYO-SAN RIGHT?
WELL, IT'S GOOD THAT YOU'RE ALL RIGHT.
.....

PEOPLE LIKE US WHO USE THE MIBUYA SKILLS... IN ORDER TO NOT BE USED BY THE AJUKI YUME*, WE HAVE TO ELIMINATE ALL EMOTIONS...

BUT IT'S ALSO TIRING TO HANDLE THE FEELING OF EMPTINESS.

*T/N: LIT. BAD DREAMS

JUST NOTICE IT ALREADY

AHH...! I SEE.

IT'S OUR ENEMY, THE CULPRIT BEHIND THE SERIES OF MURDERS.

ASHIKI YUME...?

AMONGST OUR ENEMIES, SOME ARE NOT HUMAN.

THESE CREATURES ARE REALLY POWERFUL MIND PARASITES.

すぱっ

REACH

AH! OI, WAIT A MINUTE!!

ARE YOU FEELING BETTER ALREADY!?

I'M GRATEFUL TO YOU FOR SAVING ME

BUT I HOPE THAT YOU WILL REFRAIN FROM MEDDLING IN MY BUSINESS FROM NOW ON.

DON'T BE SO STUBBORN!!

I ALREADY KNOW THE METHOD USED BY THE ENEMY. I CAN HANDLE IT BY MYSELF FROM NOW ON.

WEREN'T YOU BEING MANIPULATED BY HER?!

.....

YOU SHOULD REST A LITTLE LONGER AND LEAVE THE REST TO US—

DON'T OVERDO IT!

I'M NOT BEING STUBBORN.

IT'S SURPRISING... YOU'RE QUITE AN EMOTIONAL MIBUYA.

WHAT DID YOU DO TO HER?

MAYBE IT'S BECAUSE OF THAT?

A MERE HUMAN IS NO MATCH FOR THEM!

AS SOMEONE WHO SERVES THE GOD OF FLAME, IT'S MY DUTY TO HUNT THOSE ASHIKI YUME DOWN!

I ALREADY KNOW THE ENEMY'S GOAL.

IN ANY CASE!

I'LL TAKE MY LEAVE!

I WILL DEFINITELY SEAL THE GOD.

THAT LADY... WHO IS SHE?

WHAT'S WITH HER... SHE KNOWS THAT OTHERS WILL BE WORRIED ABOUT HER AND YET...

STUBBORN BRAT

SHE'S A SHRINE MAIDEN FROM THE SHIBANYOTA SHRINE, A SHINTO SHRINE WHOSE LINEAGE TRACES ALL THE WAY BACK TO THE WARRING STATES PERIOD.

THEY EXIST FOR THE PURPOSE OF HANDLING CRISES THAT POSSIBLY OCCUR ONCE EVERY THOUSAND YEARS...

THEY CAN BE CALLED BATTLING MAIDENS WHO "EXIST FOR THE FINAL BATTLE OF THE HUMAN RACE".

BECAUSE OF THIS,

IT'S A LITTLE SIMILAR TO A "SHIELD" THAT CAN PROTECT THE EXISTENCE OF HUMAN BEINGS.

WASTING AWAY THEIR LIVES, OR EVEN DISAPPEAR INTO NOTHINGNESS...

A SORROWFUL EXISTENCE...

7

WELL... WE CAN PROBABLY LOOK AT THEM FROM THAT PERSPECTIVE, RIGHT...?

.....

I GUESS.

NOW, LET'S GET BACK TO THE TOPIC. COULD YOU TELL ME ABOUT THE OUTCOME OF YOUR INVESTIGATION?

UNCLE, IS THIS PERSON A "SHIKI USER" TOO?

MY "RELIGION" IS CONSIDERED HERETICAL FROM CERTAIN POINT OF VIEWS, SO IT DOESN'T MATTER WHICH IT IS.

...OR WAS IT TAOISM?

KIM IS A CONFUCIUS SORCERER FROM NORTH KOREA. HE'S RESIDING IN JAPAN NOW...

OHH! I GET IT NOW!

ALTHOUGH STRICTLY SPEAKING, THEY ARE INHERENTLY DIFFERENT... TO PUT IT SIMPLY, HE'S LIKE A CHINESE SPIRITUAL MEDIUM.

AH...

...?

THERE'S NOT MUCH TIME LEFT.

PLEASE TAKE A LOOK AT THIS.

I'VE HEARD ABOUT YOU.. NICE TO MEET YOU,

KOUTAROU-SAN.

WHAT!?

I DON'T REMEMBER BECOMING YOUR DISCIPLE!

WELL, THIS IS MY DISCIPLE, KUGA KOUTAROU.

HE *ENTERED* THIS WORLD JUST RECENTLY.

NICE TO MEET YOU TOO..

JOINING THE POINTS UP WITH A LINE...

THAT'S REALLY... A LOT.

THESE ARE THE LOCATIONS FOR THE SERIES OF MYSTERIOUS HOMICIDES THAT HAPPENED IN TOKYO.

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!

IDIOT.

THAT'S A HEXAGRAM! THE PERFECT MAGIC FORMATION!

BONK

WHAT IS THIS?

THIS IS...

...

IT'S ALSO KNOWN AS THE STAR OF DAVID,

A NAME THAT'S NOT REALLY COMPATIBLE WITH THIS COUNTRY

JUST LIKE FUKIMO-SAN AND GENNOJOU-SAN HAVE PREDICTED... THE HEXAGRAM WILL MOST LIKELY BE COMPLETED IN OKUBO.

IN OTHER WORDS, THEY ARE KILLING PEOPLE IN ORDER TO COMPLETE THE MAGIC FORMATION...

I CAN SEE IT NOW...

WHEN IT COMES TO..

WITH THE WHOLE OF KANTOU TARGETTED IN THE INVESTIGATION, I WANT YOU TO SEND THE DATA OF THE VICTIMS WHO WERE MURDERED THIS MONTH TO THE COMPUTER OVER HERE.

MÜNCH-HAUSEN.

YES, MADEMOISELLE.

UNDERSTOOD. PLEASE WAIT 20 SECONDS.

JUST AS I THOUGHT.

IT'S HERE.

IT'S A MAGIC FORMATION WITH TWO BARRIERS!

FOR JAPAN, THAT PROBABLY APPEARED DURING THE JOMON PERIOD.

IF THIS FORMATION IS THE ONE USED SINCE THAT ERA, I'M AFRAID THAT THE POWER WILL BE REALLY STRONG.

A "JOU", HUH. .

IT'S CAREFULLY PLANNED.

AND IT NEEDS A CONSIDERABLE AMOUNT OF LIVE SACRIFICES..

THAT IS TO SAY, THAT FELLOW FROM YESTERDAY...

INVOLVED SO MANY PEOPLE FOR SUCH A REASON..?

YOU GOT THAT RIGHT... THAT'S WHY IF WE DON'T DO ANYTHING... THE NUMBER WILL CONTINUE TO INCREASE

AND BECOME A GREATER PROBLEM THAT IS HARDER TO OVERCOME.

KOUTAROU, WHAT ARE YOU TRYING TO DO!?

DAMN IT!

I WILL DEFINITELY GET MY HANDS ON THE MASTERMIND AND BEAT HIM TO A PULP!

I'VE MADE UP MY MIND!

THAT KID... WILL PROBABLY BREAK MY HOUSE SOMEDAY...

OH, BOY...

FUFU..

HE'S REALLY AN ADORABLE BOY.

HE STILL LACKS SOME SELF-CONTROL THOUGH.

AND HE ALWAYS CAUSES TROUBLE FOR OTHERS ...

KOUTAROU-SAN S REALLY A HOT-BLOODED YOUNG MAN.

I GUESS I WILL GO AS WELL.

NOW... AS A SENIOR DETECTIVE, THERE'S NO WAY THAT I CAN OVERLOOK THIS MATTER.

I HEARD THAT SINCE ANCIENT TIMES, MANY GODS EXIST IN JAPAN.

ABOUT EIGHT MILLION OF THEM?

YEAH

WHAT ARE YOU TRYING TO SAY?

GENNOJOU-SAN

ALTHOUGH IT'S JUST MY OWN SPECULATION...

IN ORDER TO TURN THE IMAGINED VISION INTO REALITY, A LARGE NUMBER OF HUMAN "THOUGHTS" WOULD NEED TO BE GATHERED. INCREASING THE NUMBER OF SACRIFICES TO GAIN BELIEVERS MIGHT HAVE BEEN A SHORTCUT TO GATHER THEM.

MY GUESS IS THAT... THAT FORMATION MAY ALLOW ONE TO SUMMON A HIGH LEVEL GOD.

FROM PUBLIC OPINION, URBAN LEGENDS, RUMORS ON THE INTERNET, TO THE ACTUAL HOMICIDE CASES...

THE NEGATIVE FORCES ACTING ON THIS CITY HAVE INDEED REACHED A CRITICAL POINT.

THAT'S RIGHT. IT'S CONSIDERED LARGE-SCALE.

ISN'T THAT MADE FOR THE PURPOSE OF SUMMONING "SOMETHING BIG"?

MAYBE SOMETHING LIKE A GOD?

THE WORLD IS NOW FILLED WITH THE IDEA THAT IT'S NOT STRANGE AT ALL IF ONE'S IMAGINATION TURNED INTO SOMETHING REAL.

AMONG THE ENEMY, THERE IS SOMEONE WHO CAN ACCOMPLISH THAT.

THAT ONE WHO WAS CONTROLLING THAT MIYABI EARLIER ON!

I SEE...

A SUMMONING CIRCLE, HUH.

THAT'S INDEED VERY POSSIBLE

TO EMBODY A GOD...

SO THIS IS THE TRUTH BEHIND THE SERIES OF INCIDENTS?

FUFU... I WILL LEAVE IT UP TO YOUR IMAGINATION.

IS IT THAT PERSON WHO HAS SOME STRANGE AFFINITY WITH YOU?

SHE CALLS HERSELF ARALA... BUT I DON'T THINK SHE'S A RESIDENT OF THIS WORLD*.

T/N: IF SHE'S NOT A HUMAN.

UNDERSTOOD, MADEMOISELLE.

THE ENEMY WILL BE EMBODIED IN A FEW HOURS TIME.

IMAGINATION?

MUNCHHAUSEN, PLEASE START WITH THE SEARCH NOW.

THE PLACE WHERE WE CAN FIND ALL THE ANSWERS.

LET'S HEAD OVER THERE NOW.

ARE THEY REALLY GOING TO SUMMON A GOD TO THIS WORLD?

TO THIS ERA? THE YEAR 2005?

YOU EVEN HAD TO MANIPULATE THE INFORMATION...?

THAT'S SOME HARD WORK.

WE STILL CAN'T FIND ANY TRACE OF EVIDENCE THAT WILL LEAD US TO THE MASTERMIND...

WE SENSE SOME MAGICAL PRESENCE

IN THE ABANDONED HOUSE THAT IS 200 METERS IN FRONT OF YOUR CURRENT LOCATION

RING 444 44

MUJUGA-SAMA.

YES, BUTLER-SAN?

WHERE ARE THE OTHERS?

MADAM AND KIM-SAMA ARE HEADING TOWARDS OTHER LOCATIONS WITH SIMILAR MAGICAL RESPONSES.

THEY'RE SPREAD OUT? SEEMS LIKE THE ENEMIES ARE GIVING US ALL THEY'VE GOT THIS TIME

I BELIEVE SO.

GOT IT.

HANG UP

OI MASTERMIND, SHOW YOURSELF RIGHT NOW!!

SO, WE MEET AGAIN?

DO YOU REALLY LIKE ME THAT MUCH...?

THAT BOY... WHEN DID HE COME HERE?

HA HA HA...

YOU AWAKEN THE "PERSON WHO EXISTS FOR THE FINAL BATTLE OF THE HUMAN RACE" WITH YOUR BARE HANDS.

AND YOU ARE THE FIRST TO ARRIVE AT THE PLACE WHERE I WILL APPEAR.

I FINALLY TRACKED YOU DOWN!!

SHUT THE HELL UP!!

YOU HAVE GREAT POTENTIAL.

IT'S NO WONDER THAT YOU'RE ODETTE'S FAVORITE.

TO THINK THAT YOU CAN CONTROL THAT SHRINE MAIDEN, YOU ARE QUITE SOMETHING YOURSELF.

ODETTE...?

SEEMS LIKE YOU CAN SENSE THE PRESENCE OF THE ENEMY. YOU'RE PRETTY GOOD.

SO, TELL ME, HOW DID YOU DO THAT?

I'M SURPRISED THAT YOU ARRIVED HERE BEFORE ME.

UNCLE!

THE TWO OF YOU ARE HAVING ALL THE FUN...

THAT'S UNFAIR.

IT'S JUST A COINCIDENCE?!

THIS FELLOW WAS ALREADY STANDING THERE WHEN I RAN HERE.

OI! DON'T GIVE US THAT KIND OF FACE!

WELL, THANKS.

AH, I'M DELIGHTED. IT'S MY TYPE OF GUY.

NICE TO MEET YOU.

YOU'RE... ARALA CHAN, RIGHT?

YOU WRETCH... YOU GIVE OFF THE SCENT OF SOMEONE WHO LIKES TO PLAY WITH THE LIVES OF OTHERS WITHOUT A REASON..

YOU'RE NOT THE MASTERMIND.

MY MASTER IS REALLY STRICT...

SO I CAN'T LET YOU COMPLETE... YOUR WORK!

THAT'S RIGHT ...

THE SORCERESS OVER ON MY SIDE IS ALREADY PREPARING TO BREAK THAT MAGIC FORMATION!

I WON'T LET YOU PROCEED WITH THE RITUAL!

DON'T JOKE AROUND WITH ME!!

THAT'S WHY

YOU GUYS MADE IT DIFFICULT FOR ME TO PUT THE LIVE SACRIFICES IN SPECIFIC POSITIONS ON THE MAGICAL FORMATION.

THAT'S TROUBLE-SOME ..

LET'S DEFEAT YOU AND PUT AN END TO THIS GAME!

I DECIDED TO BRING THEM ALONG.

!!!

THEY EVEN PREPARED SUCH A THING...!!

A HUMAN PILLAR ...?

YUU!!!

YUU...!?

!?

AH...

SE... SENPAI ...?

I... I...

SAVE ME

AHHH

WHAT'S THIS. .!? HU... HUMANS!?

THEY ARE.. STILL ALIVE. .

AHH... YOU GUYS KNOW EACH OTHER?

SENPAI!

YUU!!!

I DECIDED TO BRING HIM BACK SINCE HE'S SO ADORABLE.

TO BE TRUTHFUL, I ONLY NEEDED LIVE FEMALE SACRIFICES. .

HOWEVER, DURING THE LAST PHASE OF THE RITUAL..

I'LL SAVE YOU RIGHT AWAY! WAIT FOR ME, YUU!!

KOUTAROU-SENPAI!

IF YOU DON'T GET HERE RIGHT AWAY...

THAT'S RIGHT... HE MIGHT NOT MAKE IT ALIVE...

UWAAA AAHH

NOW... HURRY UP.

YOUR IMPORTANT FRIEND IS RIGHT HERE...

ZASAE-SAN!

CHE...!!

YUU
—!!

WILL
HE MAKE IT
IN TIME!?

RITUAL COMPLETED.

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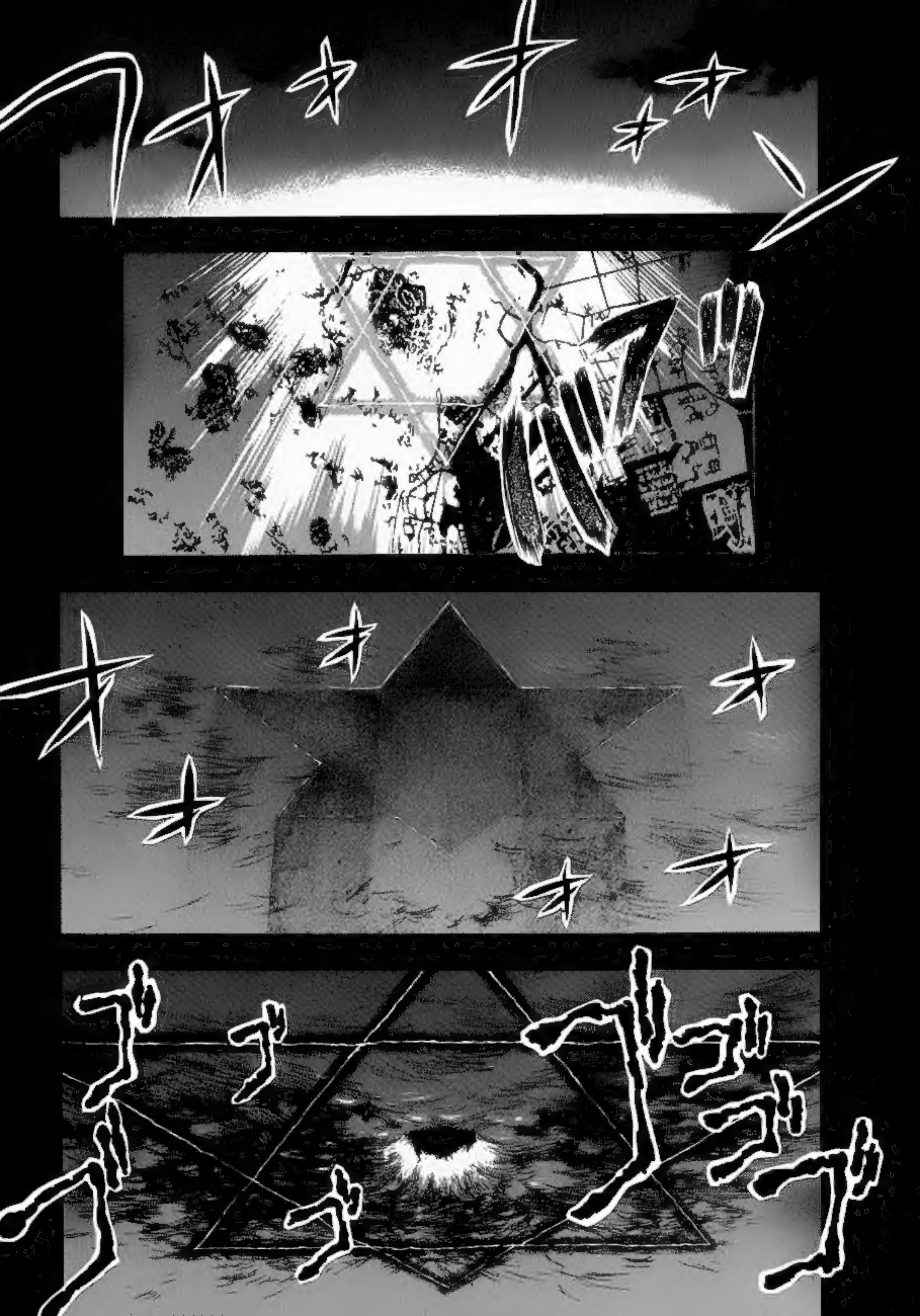
DAMN...

KOUTA-ROU!!



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WE FAILED...

IT LOOKS LIKE THAT'S THE GOD THEY'RE TRYING TO SUMMON...

WELCOME TO THE... CASTLE OF SHIKIGAMI...

Chapter 3 – End